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Concept of human security in international relations

Summary

The subject of the dissertation is the concept human security - a research issue concerning problems from the area of social studies. The dissertation focuses on recognising the assumptions of the concept of human security and its influence on security in international relations.

The concept became a central concern of international law and might be considered as one of the greatest social achievements of the 20th century. According to UNDP Human Development Reports (1994) - which was the first significant document dealing with the problem – the human security refers to protection from permanent threats such as famine, illnesses, oppression as well as protection from sudden and harmful upheavals in daily life.

The concept of human security refers to protection from old and new safety threats - lingering impoverishment, ethnic violence, human trafficking, climatic changes, pandemics, international terrorism and abrupt economic crisis. Threats like that have a tendency to become global problems. Concept of human security demonstrates an extensive attitude towards the subject and presents a wide range of possible solutions, not only conventional ones. The concept of human security recognises connections and correlations between development, human rights and international security. This dissertation focuses on current international security issues. National security is not the same as the security of people living in the country. The concept of human security appeared in response to new challenges and threats connected with the post-Cold War period. The need of security is very complex, it is connected with satisfying such needs as: continuation, unity, identity, independence, peace, ownership as well as guaranteeing functioning and certainty of progress.

Security is one of the basic objectives of national policy. It is worth to mention that national security in international relations is essentially international. The concept of human security definitely extends beyond traditional notions of national security and military security – it includes development and respecting of human rights. It is a complex idea of interrelated basic rights: freedom from fear, freedom from poverty and right to dignity. Concept of human security concerns individual, not the territory. It is the protection of daily life and dignity, it

primarily focuses on protection from various threats. In this concept particular attention deserves concern of an individual, who experiences enormous pace of technological development and who has problems with basic existential needs and cannot obstruct poverty, hunger and social pathologies which are connected with the development of civilization. There is not many academic publications concerning the question of human security in international relations. Considering this particular subject seems to be justified as there is no such complete and scientific report that explores the concept of human security in a complex way. The dissertation primarily bases on these resources: annual UNDP reports, reports from international conferences and documents of organizational units of UN.

This dissertation contributes to academic research concerning concept of human security.

The main purpose of the research was to define main assumptions of the concept of human security and to determine its material scope.

Specific objectives of the dissertation:

1. Presenting contemporary interpretations of concept of human security.
2. Defining the scope of the notion: human security.
3. Identifying characteristics of the threats to human security.
4. Identifying correlations between individual security and human rights.
5. Describing the actions taken by the organizations dealing with individual security.
6. Demonstrating the essence of protecting individuals in specific situations.
7. Presenting the certain level of responsibility of the countries for human security.

The subject of study is the concept of human security.

The crucial research question is : In what way the principles of concept of human security influence the security in international relations? It is accompanied with the following research problems:

1. How has the security in the 21st century changed and what is its current character?
2. What is the material scope of the concept of human security?
3. What are the main threats to the concept of human security?
4. What is the concept of human security and what are human rights? Are these notions alike?
5. What is the function of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in the concept of human security?
6. In what situations protection in specific conditions can be applied?

7. What are the functions of countries in the concept of human security?

The research hypothesis was formulated: the realization of the principles of concept of human security is important condition in guaranteeing security in international relations in the 21st century.

Detailed hypotheses were formulated in relation to main research hypothesis:

1. The notion of security has changed significantly. The aim of all the actions connected with the concept of human security is to guarantee the chance for one's development in his/her closest surroundings (school, work, family). Individuals should have an assurance of protection from contemporary threats that affect them in a negative way.
2. Material scope creates seven dimensions of security: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, social security and political security.
3. Main threats to the concept of human security are connected with the freedom from fear and freedom from poverty.
4. Human rights were described as the core of the concept of human security making its normative scheme. They are crucial for living in dignity and prosperity as well as for living in safety. Human rights define 'human right for...' that create individual security. Concept of human security is a wider notion than human rights as it includes also the 'freedom from threats' which is absent in the idea of human rights.
5. Non-governmental organizations are one of the most prominent structures connected with the concept of human security, development and human rights. They are particularly useful to take actions connected with the concept of human security because of their scale and operating range. Non-governmental organizations become the most noticeable promoter of human rights on behalf of such groups as: women, children, AIDS patients.
6. The concept of human security embraces the protection in globalizing world, protection of civilians in military conflicts and protection in terms of economic crisis which all refer to protection of individual in specific conditions. These are the situations which negative effects have direct influence on security and on a life of an individual.
7. The main role of the governments is to ensure the survival of the citizens as well as protect their dignity.

The following procedures of academic research were used to answer the crucial research question and to validate the hypothesis:

1. Theoretical methods:
 - a) Analysis of resource data
 - b) Researching literature, resource data and documentation – in other words evaluation of resources and literature analysis
 - c) Historical method
 - d) Comparative method
2. Test methods:
 - a) Study of literature and resource documentation
 - b) Resume of the research

In the information society with the access to electronic database and electronic versions of monographs and academic articles, it is not possible to embrace in one study the whole material from these resources. It causes the necessity to make selection based on uniqueness, synthesis of opinions and relevance to the chosen subject of research.

In the introduction the subject matter of this dissertation is defined. The author explains the choice of the presented subject. Objectives of the research, crucial research questions and hypothesis are presented as well as the limitations of the material scope.

Chapter one presents security as the category in social sciences. It is emphasized by drawing attention to evolution process of the notion of security, which is described in the following subsection. Process in which the notion of security was growing was usually referred to as ‘extending’ and ‘deepening’. The simplest definition of security is lack of peril. The following questions were formulated: *whose* security? (referring to individuals) and security *of what?* (referring to all the threats with its correlations).

Chapter two is the introduction to the notion of security and to the foundations of the concept of human security. It explains the sense of concept of human security connected with the concept of development - mainly referring to dangers and basic priorities of human freedom and dignity. An important issue is what distinguishes concept of human security from other concepts. The concept of human security serves as a point of reference for the international agreements concerning protection from the oppression of the state. If the country is not able to ensure security of its citizens, the responsibility is taken by international community. The roots of the concept of human security are typically connected with the United Nations as its analytical tool that serves for better identification of international

community's situation. Narrow scope of the concept is presented, which is connected with 'freedom from fear', respecting human rights and necessity to organize military operations in order to protect civilians. The wider scope of the concept of human security is this triad: 'continuation-subsistence-development'. Reports of UNDP, which are significant to the concept of human security are also discussed in the chapter. Since the publication of the Human Development Report (1994), all subsequent reports have approached the concept of human security and the challenges connected with it in various countries.

Chapter three describes main threats to the human security, especially civil conflicts, terrorism and organized crime. Freedom from hardship is aimed at eliminating hunger and impoverishment as well as at providing common education at basic level, promoting the equality of sexes and social advancement of women, limiting the children mortality, improvement of mother's health, struggling with HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, providing ecological balance and building global partnership working for development. Extreme poverty, hunger and diseases are the most valid problems which have been affecting human beings since centuries and are still the most important challenges to the international community. In the chapter the author puts the emphasis on the essence of poverty that is the cause of hunger and infectious diseases. The actions taken by the international community against hunger, diseases and extreme poverty have not brought any results yet. Without solving such problems as overpopulation, international and national conflicts, it would not be possible to struggle with hunger, diseases and poverty in the world.

The crucial part of the dissertation is chapter four which presents correlation between human security and human rights. Without a doubt in the second half of the 20th century there was a noticeable advancement in protection of human rights. Threats to humanity caused by the wars created new tasks for international community concerning human rights at a global level. According to UNDP report from 1994, one of the most important aspects of the concept of human security is that people should live in a society that respects basic human rights. For most people the sense of insecurity comes from the concern about daily life, not the concern about global disaster. In the discourse of the concept of human security, human rights seem to be only a subset of human problems connected with security, one principle among many others. Characteristic quality of human rights and human security is that both concern mankind. In this chapter the author explains what are the human rights and what is the human security, which of the notions is broader and what it contains.

Chapter five presents institutions working for the concept of human security, the role of global community's actions concerning the human is emphasized. The author also presents the advantages of organizations that influence the concept of human security.

Chapter six draws attention to protection of individual in specific conditions such as: protection in globalizing world, protection of civilians in military conflicts, protection in terms of economic crisis and protection from terrorism. The effects of globalization on the individual security and on some members of international community were also described. The chapter describes what is the protection of civilians and who suffers the most in military conflicts. What is more, chapter six demonstrates what aspects of public life are affected by economic crisis and what pathologies it creates.

Chapter seven presents the role of governments in providing subsistence and dignity of individual. It is also stated that concept of human security is particularly important during and after the conflict to protect civilians.

The conclusion is a summary of the results of research and verification of the main hypothesis.

The main purpose of the research was to define the assumptions of the concept of human security and to determine its material scope. It was realised through organizing data, presenting contemporary interpretations of the concept of human security and defining the threats to human security. It is proved that the concept is not focused on weaponry problems, rather on issues connected with human life and dignity. The new approach to problems of security is defined as 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom from poverty'. Detailed conclusions of the research are presented in the following chapters of the dissertation. The author presents here only a few essential conclusions based on analysis of the main research issues.

The crucial research question that is : In what way the principles of concept of human security influence the security in international relations? was answered due to conducted analysis. Data from the research allows to answer the question explicitly. The concept of human security refers to protection from old and new safety threats - lingering impoverishment, ethnic violence, human trafficking, climatic changes, pandemics, international terrorism and abrupt economic crisis. The concept of human security reflects a comprehensive approach, that applies a wide range of possible solutions in an integrated way.

Conducted research also help to determine how the security has changed in the 21st century and what is its character now? The presented account of the phenomenon demonstrates that the security has transformed significantly. Analysis of documents from various periods of time allows to demonstrate the evolution of the approach towards security and to better

understand a very slow pace of changes in that area. Results of the research lead to the conclusion that individual becomes very important in the international discourse and changes into an 'actor' in international relations. The concept of human security explicitly refers to improvement of living standards, whereas everything that can lower living standards is a threat for security. On the other hand, everything that improves the living standards e.g. economic growth, better access to resources etc. can also improve human security. Human security concerns chronic threats such as hunger, impoverishment, diseases and oppression. It involves protection from abrupt and harmful disruptions in daily life at home as well as at work and in the community. Human security also refers to protection of personal security and freedom from direct and indirect threats of violence. Concept of human security focuses on strengthening life protection, livelihood, individual dignity of human being and developing potential of every single individual.

The evolution of the notion of security is usually referred to as 'extending', a process in which understanding of security evolved in many directions. The concept of human security places person (people) in the centre of attention, not the state. Without the concept of human security state security cannot be achieved and vice-versa.

With the results of the research the author managed to answer the question: what is the material scope of the concept of human security? It consists of seven dimensions of security: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, social security and political security.

The problem connected with the question: what are the main threats in the concept of human security? was solved by presenting characteristics of the most important threats i.e. threat of losing incomes, threat of hunger, threat of diseases, threat of natural disasters, threats to traditional relations and values and threats to civil liberty. It is important to mention conflicts in Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan and Ukraine. Freedom from fear is a concept of common security connected with preventing terrorism, using nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, reducing the risk of war and use of violence and encouraging peace initiatives. Freedom from poverty is a common idea in working for eliminate hunger, providing common education at basic level, limiting children mortality, improvement of mother's health, struggling with HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Considering the question of main threats in the concept of human security, the author points out that every human being has the right to living standard that provides health and prosperity for himself/herself and his/her family including: food, clothing, accommodation, health care, social services as well as the right to insurance benefits against unemployment, disability, old age and losing money.

The results of conducted research allow to answer the question: what is the concept of human security and what are human rights? and are these notions alike? The analysis proved that threats to humanity caused by wars created specific tasks for international community concerning human rights in a global way. On the current level of civilization development, the human being – its rights and freedoms became a crucial problem of national and international politics. The evolution of human rights is also treated as a measure of civilization development. Human rights are described as a root of the concept of human security and create its framework. Human rights are the basis of living in dignity, prosperity and safety, they also define ‘human right for...’ which creates the human security. Human rights violations lead to conflicts and lack of security while respecting them prevents conflicts. The results of conducted research demonstrate that the concept of human security, beside human rights also includes ‘safety from threats’ which is not present in the definition of human rights.

The author’s analysis also managed to answer the question: what is the function of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in the concept of human security? The characteristic of activities of these organizations is presented in the dissertation. They have become supporters of such groups as: women, children or AIDS patients. The positive quality of these organizations is their ability to take risk and introduce innovative programmes. They also have extensive experience, the organizations identify various threats to human security. The conducted research also prove that not every crisis situation could be successfully coped with by the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations e.g. conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Gaza, Israel and Ukraine. However, one of the greatest social achievements in contemporary international relations is placing the individual in the centre of interest of international law and institutions that help to respect it. The concept of human security has become the interest of international community and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations representing it.

Also the question: in what situations protection in specific conditions can be applied? can be answered due to the author’s research. Human security is determined by specific conditions such as: globalization, economic crisis, terrorist attacks, the civilians’ situation during military conflicts, spreading economic and political liberalization. Societies that used to be traditional are often vulnerable to abstract character of new institutions, economic detachment and competitive political economy which can result in homelessness. The norm R2P is not as much a novelty in international activities protecting population from mass murders, as it is a new value. It joins various norms together and can be widely used. The

responsibility for protection is a collective obligation, it emphasizes the fact that countries and international community are obliged to active protection of basic human rights, protection from genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. In this way the strategy of respecting human rights, international and humanitarian law is realized e.g. in Rwanda or Srebrenica.

Economic crisis affects various spheres of public life because of the public budget cuts. It appears that percentage of children living in poverty and social exclusion in some European Union countries increased during economic crisis. Families became more vulnerable to poverty because of growing unemployment and lowering incomes.

The conducted research allows as well to answer the question: what are the functions of countries in the concept of human security? It is pointed out that the governments gain responsibility for providing sustenance, continuation and dignity of population.

The answers to the research problems got from the conducted analysis positively assess the research hypothesis: the realization of the principles of concept of human security is important condition in guarantee of security in international relations in the 21st century. The detailed hypothesis were also positively assessed.

Conducted research prove that the concept of human security places individual in the centre of interest. In that way there appears various conditions which threatens sustenance and dignity. The concept of human security represents the protection of basic liberties which make the essence of life. It means that the concept of human security is the protection from critical and widespread threats. It is also creating a political, social, environmental, economical, military and cultural system that together provide the possibility to live in dignity. The concept of human security definitely extends beyond traditional notion of national and military security as it embraces respecting human rights. It is a complex idea of interrelated basic rights: freedom from fear, freedom from poverty and right to dignity.

With the results of conducted research the author positively assess the hypothesis that the material scope of the concept of human security consists of economical, food, health, environmental, personal, social and political safety.

The data obtained during the research positively assess the hypothesis that main threats in the concept of human security are connected with the freedom from fear and freedom from poverty.

The hypothesis that human rights are the core of the concept of human security making its normative scheme is also confirmed. Human rights are the basis of living in dignity, prosperity and safety. The concept of human security is a broader concept than human rights.

The hypothesis that non-governmental organizations are one of the most prominent structures connected with concept of human security, development and human rights is confirmed as well. Non-governmental organizations are particularly useful to take actions connected with the concept of human security because of their scale and operating range. They also become the most noticeable promoter of human rights on behalf of such groups as: women, children, AIDS patients.

The data obtained during research confirmed the hypothesis that the concept of human security embraces the protection in globalizing world, protection of civilians in military conflicts and protection in terms of economic crisis which all refer to protection of individual in specific conditions. These are the situations which negative effects have direct influence on security and life of an individual.

The hypothesis that the main role of the governments is to ensure the survival of the citizens as well as ensure their dignity is also confirmed in the research.

In the course of the research appeared various problems. In the information society with the access to electronic database and electronic versions of monographs and academic articles, it is not possible to embrace in one study the whole material from these resources. It causes the necessity to make selection based on uniqueness, synthesis of opinions and relevance to the chosen subject of research.

The dissertation provides extensive knowledge from conducted research, it fills the gap in the studies of concept of human security in international relations.

The conducted analysis present the problem connected with the concept of individual security. The interpretation of the concept of human security as freedom from fear and freedom from poverty points out that work and health are the foundations of quality of life and of dignity, it also emphasizes the correlation between health and impoverishment.

Despite the institutionalization and huge promotion of the concept of human security it is still being formulated. It is a kind of challenge for the world and an impulse to redefine the traditional approach towards security. No matter the necessity of further polishing the concept of human security it is evident that the concept is meaningful for the international security. As it is mentioned earlier, the threats to human security affect all countries, not only those from the bottom of ranking of social development. In the more and more interrelated world, with developing world trade, communication and transport – the utter isolation of countries with its

inner problems is virtually impossible. It should be pointed out that domestic dangers become threatening the stability of external relations. It concerns the highly developed countries due to generating migration of starving, homeless and unemployed people, transmission of pollution and infectious diseases and transferring social pathologies including organized crime.

The dissertation is useful for research institutions dealing with problems of security and for the students and all the others interested in its subject matter. It can also provide a contribution to further research in this area.